



Department of Veterans Affairs

OMB Number 2900-0554
Estimated Burden: 35 hours

Homeless Provider Grant and Per Diem Program Application



Department of Veterans Affairs Homeless Providers Grant and Per Diem

Program

SECTION A – GENERAL INFORMATION AND INSTRUCTIONS

Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA) Notice: This application has been approved by OMB (Office of Management and Budget) under PRA, 44 USC 3507, and assigned OMB approval number. The requested information is needed and will be used by VA to determine eligibility for and award grants under the VA Homeless Providers Grant Program (PL102-590). Submission of the requested information is required to obtain a benefit.

Respondent Burden: Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 35 hours per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data source, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimated or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Purpose and goals: The purpose of the VA Homeless Providers Grant and Per Diem Program is to promote the development and provision of supportive housing and/or appropriated supportive services, including innovative approaches to assist homeless veterans in the transition from homelessness and to enable them to live as independently as possible. The goal of this program is to help homeless veterans, primarily those living in places not ordinarily meant for human habitation or in emergency shelters, to (1) achieve residential stability; (2) increase their levels and/or income; and (3) obtain greater self-determination. These goals are reflected in the application package and selection criteria for the program.

Residential stability refers to access to, and length of stay in, stable affordable housing. Achieving residential stability involves not only the availability of affordable, permanent housing, but also the success of the program in addressing the problems that led to the veteran becoming homeless. Those problems may involve mental illness, substance abuse, physical disabilities, unemployment, or other factors.

Increased skill level and/or income refers to the resources needed to enable persons to live as self-sufficiently as possible. For many homeless persons this involves actions to bridge the gap between current income and the cost of living. The gap could be closed through employment, a higher-paying job, or access to entitlement benefits. The likelihood of obtaining a job, or a higher-paying job, could be enhanced through job or skills training, or enrolling in General Equivalency Diploma (GED) or higher education courses. For homeless persons with mental or physical disabilities that are so severe as to rule out outside employment, the goal of increased skill level and/or income may involve actions to increase self-sufficiency in other ways (e.g., life skills training, increased income through employment within a project, or increase come through access to entitlement benefits).

Greater self-determination refers to increases in the influence that participants have on decisions-that affect their lives. Those increases may result from such actions as involvement in the development of his or her individual housing and supportive services plan (including developing personal goals), participating in resident advisory council meetings or other involvement in the development of program rules and procedures, involvement in program

implementation through such activities as employment and volunteer services, and choice in selecting service providers.

Measurable objectives: To apply these goals to their proposed program, applicants must establish and include in their applications measurable objectives for each of the three goals. Applicants must also describe how their proposed programs will help them achieve these goals.

The measurable objectives established by each applicant are expected to vary based on the specific needs and characteristics of the homeless veterans proposed to be served as well as the specific program chosen. Where the population proposed to be selected has multiple or particularly difficult problems that need to be addressed, objectives should reflect realistic expectations.

The highest ratings under the quality of project plan criterion of the application will be awarded to applications containing project plans that describe specific measurable objectives for each of the common goals specified above, how the proposed housing and services will help residents reach these goals, how the program's success will be evaluated, and how program modifications will be made, if necessary, as a result of this evaluation.

VA will not consider the level of expectations described in the objective in rating applications. That is, an application that contains realistic objectives reflection of the very dysfunctional nature of the population to be served will be treated the same as an application that contains more optimistic objectives reflection of a less dysfunctional population. VA specifically does not want the process of establishing measurable objectives to lead applicants away from serving homeless persons with the most serious problems. VA does want applicants for each program to adopt the three goals, carefully consider how they can achieve them through their proposed projects, establish measurable objectives to gauge whether they are achieving the goals and, if funded, periodically measure project results and, as necessary make program adjustments.

Eligible activities: Funds may be used to establish new programs to furnish supportive services and supportive housing for homeless veterans, including:

1. Facilities for transitional housing designed to enable homeless veterans to become as independent as possible and to move to permanent housing within a 24 month period, which may include up to 6 months of follow-up services after residents move to permanent housing;
2. Housing that is, or part of, a particularly innovative project for, or alternative methods of, meeting the immediate and long-term needs of home less veterans;
3. Supportive services for homeless veterans not in conjunction with supportive housing;

Eligible applicants: Public or nonprofit private entities are eligible to apply for grants and per diem payments, including States, metropolitan cities, urban counties, or other governmental entities, Indian tribal governments, and private nonprofit organizations.

Grant award process: VA will notify applicants with the highest ranked applications that can be funded with the dollars available for that competition that they have been conditionally selected.



Department of Veterans Affairs Homeless Providers Grant and Per Diem

Program

VA expects to announce these selections within 30 days of the application submission deadline. Such applicants will be subsequently notified of the additional project information necessary for grant award and the date of the deadline for submission of such information. If an applicant is unable to meet any conditions for grant award within the specified timeframe, VA reserves the right to not award funds and to use the funds available for other components of the Grant and Per Diem Program.

Technical deficiencies: VA will notify an applicant, in writing of any curable technical deficiencies in the application. Corrections must then be received by VA within 14 calendar days from the date of VA's letter, and in accordance with the information specified in VA's letter. If the applicant fails to submit the corrections within the 14-day cure period, VA will disqualify the application.

Curable technical deficiencies are items that are not necessary for VA review under the selection criteria (e.g., failure to submit a required certification). Applicants may not submit items that would improve the substantive quality of the application after the application deadline.

Documentation and Public Access Requirements: VA will ensure that documentation and other information regarding each application submitted are sufficient to indicate the basis upon which assistance was provided or denied. This material, including any letters of support, will be made available for public inspection for a five-year period beginning not less than 30 days after the award of the assistance. Material will be made available in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act (5 U.S.C. 552) and VA's implementing regulation at 38 CFR § 1.553.

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS FOR APPLICATION COMPLETION

Components: Funds are available for assistance in the form of grants to:

1. Construct structures to establish new supportive housing facilities, new facilities to provide supportive services, or to establish service centers;
2. Acquire, expand and remodel/alter structures to establish new supportive housing facilities, new facilities to provide supportive services, or to establish service centers.

A more detailed description of these components, including program requirements, is contained in the rule published in the *Federal Register*, 38 CFR part 17.700. A copy of these regulations is provided in the appendix of this application. Applicants must review the regulations before completing this application.

Applying for more than one component. Applicants who are applying for multiple components must submit separate applications for each component unless the applicant considers the components to be mutually dependent, in which case they should be submitted in a single application. Each application will be rated as a whole and not by its component parts. A weak component therefore, will reduce the rating of the application as a whole. When applying for

multiple components, applicants must determine and indicate a priority order for the components in the event that funding may be offered for some but not all components.

Application deadline: Only timely applications will be considered for funding. To be considered timely, the application must be received at the address and by the time and date specified in the Notice of Fund Availability (NOFA) published in the *Federal Register*. Applications received after the date and time published in the NOFA will not be accepted even if postmarked by the deadline date. Following the application deadline, applicants will be notified that their application has been received.

Organization of the Application: The application is composed in a tablet format. This allows for easy removal of each individual page for copying and insertion into typewriters or printers. Not all pages are to be completed by all applicants. Please pay close attention to the specific instructions in each section to ensure you do not fail to complete a page or complete pages that are unnecessary for your proposal.

The application is divided into the following five sections: (A) General Instructions, (B) First Submission, (C) Second Submission, (D) Forms, and (E) Appendices. The majority of the application has been formatted in a manner allowing you to place your information and responses directly on the form. You will find a wide variety of response types.

Generally a combination of "Fill in the Blank" and "Narrative or Essay" have been used. Many questions have specific text box spaces for your responses. Responses should be typed, by using a typewriter, computer, or word processor in the appropriate space provided unless otherwise indicated. **Font size should be 10 point or larger. Do not use the backs of the pages.** You may duplicate on white paper and distribute these materials as needed.

Specific Instructions: Specific Instructions are located at the beginning of each area with most areas being self-explanatory.

Responses to Questions: Please do not read "into" the questions. Simply, answer the questions in a direct manner. Be sure to answer all parts of the question. The questions are designed to provide an accurate view of your proposal to a review panel. The space that is provided is sufficient to complete an accurate response. If you find yourself having trouble answering a question in the space provided look at your response and eliminate what may be unnecessary information. Chances are that a following question will provide you an opportunity to use the eliminated information.

Information other than requested: The application is designed to provide VA with sufficient information to determine eligibility and to assign rating points for each section criterion. Applicants must not include information other than that requested. Moreover, applicants are asked to be concise in presenting requested information and must not exceed the designated spaces provided for response or add additional pages unless the application specifically instructs the applicant to respond on additional pages.



Department of Veterans Affairs Homeless Providers Grant and Per Diem

Program

Definitions and References: Definitions and references can be found in the Rules and Regulations provided in the appendices. Generally, subjects are self-explanatory or a reference is given as to where to look for a specific topic explanation.

Final Application Assembly: An assembly checklist has been provided. The application must be assembled in the order shown on the assembly checklist. After the entire application is assembled:

1. Attach the cover sheet;
2. Number every page of the application sequentially using the applicant page number box;
3. Enter the appropriate page number of each form on the checklist;
4. If a form is not applicable, enter "NA" in the page column of the checklist;
5. Submit the original plus three (3) copies (on white paper);
6. **Do not punch holes in the application;**
7. **Do not submit the application in a loose-leaf binder;**
8. The same authorized representative of the organization who signed the assurances must sign the Standard Form 424.

For further information: If you have any questions regarding the VA Homeless Providers Grant and Per Diem Program, contact the Program Office at:

Mail Address: VA Homeless Providers Grant and Per Diem Program
 Mental Health Strategic Healthcare Group (116E)
 Department of Veterans Affairs
 810 Vermont Ave. NW
 Washington, D.C. 20420

Telephone: (202) 273-8445, (202) 273-8443, (202) 273-8442
FAX: (202) 272-9069

Note: The telephone and FAX numbers are not toll-free numbers.